

INTRODUCTION

I. PURPOSE

The City of Alexandria Comprehensive Plan is a dynamic planning tool intended to guide the future growth and development of the City. The Comprehensive Plan is based on local and regional historical facts, trends, and governmental planning standards. This document presents the Comprehensive Plan for Alexandria, Minnesota; reflective of the community planning process conducted in 2007.

Planning begins with vision. This vision focuses on what a desirable future would include. When looking at the development of a community, a desirable future includes the availability of jobs and business opportunities, the quality of natural resources, the availability of affordable housing, the accessibility and adequacy of public utilities, parks and recreation, schools and protective services, the condition of streets and highways, and the strength of communities. These are, in summary, some of the basic elements, which contribute to a positive quality of life.

Planning concepts must be integrated with background information to develop a Comprehensive Plan. An understanding of existing land uses, natural features, the transportation system and community facilities are required for developing a Comprehensive Plan which preserves valuable natural resources, provides for orderly development, and maximizes the efficiency of the transportation system and the delivery of services. In addition, population and employment trends and projections must be analyzed to determine future land use, transportation and facility needs.

The Comprehensive Plan is based upon local citizen input and careful consideration of significant natural and cultural resources. As a means of discerning, classifying, and analyzing historical information, this inventory of pertinent data has been compiled. The Comprehensive Plan identifies the type, amount, and pattern of growth that has taken place within the City and utilizes this information for the planning of future growth. Accordingly, the Comprehensive Plan provides a knowledge base for instituting a hierarchy of policies that will assist the community in processing a variety of development issues on a defined policy level. This information and policy base will allow decision-makers to evaluate and guide proposals benefiting the residents of Alexandria, and fulfilling the City's goals and objectives. While the Plan is intended to serve as a 25-30 year guide, it should be reviewed periodically (every 5 to 10 years) to adequately address development and changes within the community as they occur.

II. SCOPE OF PLAN

This Comprehensive Plan encompasses twelve (12) general categories of information:

1. This **Introduction** includes the purpose of the plan, the scope of the plan, the history and regional setting of the community.
2. A review of the **Planning Framework** which identifies the methods employed to obtain information for the Comprehensive Plan including statistical data and community input.
3. A review of **Demographic Characteristics and Trends** contains historic and projected population information as it relates to growth, age characteristics, education, occupation, and income level.
4. A review of the **Natural Resources** which indicates the geographical nature of the community in terms of a regional context along with an evaluation of the physical

aspects of the City such as soils information, topographical elements and physical barriers to development.

5. The **Land Use Section** includes elements that inventory existing land uses, identify potential infill or redevelopment areas and evaluate future land use. This section also categorizes the City into various land use districts for more detailed land use planning. This chapter also discusses an **Urban Growth Area** and defines a growth area outside of the current municipal limits in which future growth may be anticipated, and where the City is able to service growth with future utilities.
6. A **Housing Section** evaluates the current housing stock, identifies housing opportunities, establishes policies for future housing development and identifies housing financing programs to achieve the goals established.
7. A section on **Transportation** includes information on the current transportation system; goals and policies for future transportation planning and a transportation plan.
8. A section pertaining to **Utilities**. This section includes an overview of sanitary sewer, water and storm water utilities as they relate to the City's ability to service current and future growth area and capital improvements required to support growth.
9. A section on **Community Facilities and Public Services** includes information relating to government and community facilities and services.
10. The **Parks, Trails and Recreation Section** includes an inventory of existing park and recreational amenities an analysis of future needs and policies relating to the future parks, trails and other recreational offerings.
11. An **Economic Development Section** details Economic Development policy statements relative to Commercial, Industrial and Housing growth.
12. An **Implementation Section** describes and summarizes local controls pertaining to land use; the subdivision of land, orderly annexation, Capital Improvement Planning and implementation strategies.

III. HISTORICAL AND REGIONAL SETTING

A. History

Formed by the receding of at least four major glaciers nearly 20,000 years ago, the Alexandria area features plentiful lakes and rivers, forests, meadow, prairie and rolling hills. The City contains geographical, topographical and historic features that create one of Minnesota's most scenic regions with abundant natural resources.

History reveals the area was established preceding the Civil War (1859) by two brothers, Alexander and William Kinkhead. The brothers traveled west from Delaware and settled into the Lake Agnes area and established a U.S. Post Office. In addition to rich soils and waterways, the City also features historical sites. The following are included on the National Register of Historic Places:

**Table 1-1
Alexandria National Register of Historic Places**

Building/Location	Address or Description	Date
Alexandria Public Library	7 th Ave. W. and Fillmore St.	1985-08-23
Alexandria Residential Historic District	Roughly bounded by Cedar and Douglas Sts. and Lincoln and Twelfth Aves.	1991-01-11
Basswood Shores Site	Address Restricted	1994-04-08
Cowing, Thomas F., House	316 Jefferson St.	1985-08-23
Douglas County Courthouse	320 7th Ave., W.	1985-08-23
Great Northern Passenger Depot	N. Broadway & Agnes Blvd.	1985-08-15
Nelson, Knute, House	1219 S. Nokomis St.	1977-04-13
U.S. Post Office--Alexandria	625 Broadway St.	1979-04-16
Ward, Noah P., House	422 7th Ave., W.	1985-08-23

B. Regional Setting

Figure 1-1



The City of Alexandria is located approximately 70 miles west of the regional trade center St. Cloud on Interstate 94 and 125 miles northwest of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. The community, in central Douglas County, includes approximately 14.1 square miles of land with a population of 11,043, according to the 2005 State Demographer's estimate. Important traffic corridors in the City include I-94 and Highways 27 and 29. Figure 1-1 indicates the location of Alexandria in a regional context.

Alexandria is contained within the Long Prairie River Watershed District and within the political boundaries of US Congressional District 11 and MN Legislative Districts 11A & 11B. The City is bordered by Alexandria, Hudson, Mary and LaGrand Townships.

Mileage from Minnesota's cities to Alexandria:

- Duluth: 199 miles
- Fargo: 110 miles
- Minneapolis: 131 miles
- St. Paul: 142 miles
- St. Cloud: 68 miles
- Mankato: 165 miles
- Rochester: 214 miles